

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY CHILDREN' NETWORK

Policy Council Minutes March 26, 2003

Members/Representatives Present:

- Bruce Davis, 3rd District Board of Supervisors Representative
- Paula Roby, Department of Behavioral Health
- Andy Gruchy, Department of Behavioral Health
- Susan Melanson, Children's Network
- Clark Morrow, Sheriff's Department
- Edward Rowe, Children's Network
- Jennifer Celise-Reyes, Children's Network
- Mel Rinewalt, Probation
- Terry Kramer, Department of Behavioral Health
- Rudy Lopez, Director of Behavioral Health
- Cathy Cimbalo, Director of Department of Children's Services
- Carol Anselmi, HSS Administration
- Kent Paxton, Children's Network Officer
- Honorable Rex Victor, Juvenile Court
- Bruce Smith, Department of Public Health
- Sandra Baxter, County Counsel
- Julian Weaver, SBCSS
- Cory Nelsen, Child Support Services
- Gerald Farber, Public Defender Office
- Karen Bell, District Attorney – Juvenile
- Joyce Lewis, Department of Behavioral Health
- Don Larkin, First 5 San Bernardino
- Tom Prendergast, Department of Public Health
- Eric Frykman, Department of Public Health
- Tammy Williams, Children's Network

The meeting of the Children's Network Policy Council was called to order at 12:10 p.m. and convened by Honorable Rex Victor in the Citrus Room, fifth floor, County Government Center.

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Honorable Rex Victor welcomed those present and self-introductions were made.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda as read.

3.0 Approval of February Minutes

The February 26, 2003 minutes were approved as submitted.

4.0 Information Items

4.1 Children's Fund Report

Kent Paxton reported for Bonnie O'Connor. You all received duck adoption forms in your packets today. April 1st is the kick off for Children's Fund Annual Duck Race at the County Government Center at 11:30 a.m. – (Quackers & Cheese Event) please RSVP your attendance, as lunch will be provided. The race day is April 26th at Guasti Regional Park at 2 p.m. and a family festival will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. as well. Get out there and get those ducks adopted. Department of Children's Services has formally challenged the Probation Department to see who can get the most ducks adopted.

4.2 First Five Strategic Plan

Kent started the discussion for Don Larkin. He referred everyone to his or her packets with the Strategic Planning information. First Five is in the middle of their Strategic Planning process. They have divided the county into 6 regions and have been conducting community focus groups, technical assistance groups, etc. in order to focus on the needs of the 0 to 5 population. They are also interested in collecting data by zip code for the 0 to 17 age group through a comprehensive process by an outside organization. Don Larkin reported they are going into the community to really see what the needs are and to prioritize the needs. The complete process will take around 9 months. So far 30 different indicators have been identified, but the focus will be narrowed from 6 to 10. They are reviewing overall infant survivability, cognitive, social, emotional well being, etc. and developing a graph. Redlands Institute will be doing the GIS mapping to show the hot spots for needed services. The community teams are comprised of parents, teachers, educators, law enforcement and anyone in the community interested in providing services to the 0 to 5 population. Surveys are going out to parents for their input. The indicators will be used to focus needs in the best practices for families depending on the region. There will be an extensive database for the 0 to 18 and that information can be shared.

Basically, they plan to look at key indicators to make sure they are getting the desired outcomes along with required analysis from the State. For example, it is difficult to collect data on pregnant teens, and birth rates with the factors such as immaturity, stresses, etc. are difficult to measure. Once all the data has been collected from the community focus groups an Advisory Committee will be developed and you are welcome to be a participant. This committee will draft the recommendations to go to the Commission for action.

5.0 Discussion/Action Items

5.1 Safe Summer Resolution. Action requested to Recommend to the Board of Supervisors that "Safe Kids Summer 2003" be declared in San Bernardino County

Susan Melanson referred everyone to the draft resolution in the meeting packets. Susan asked the group to review for any changes or additions needed. A motion was made to accept the resolution as presented and Bruce Davis will forward it to the Board of Supervisors for adoption on April 22nd meeting.

This year the focus will be not to leave children unattended in cars and on drowning prevention. The Safe Summer campaign is being kicked off early before summer to gain greater public awareness. Materials have already been delivered to the Needles County departments close to the Colorado River. The campaign will cover Memorial Day to Labor Day.

The Shine the Light on Child Abuse Breakfast a great success once again this year and the feedback has been very positive.

5.2 Children's Policy Council Priority: Pre-Placement Prevention Discussion/Approval requested for Agency use of the MDT Referral Assessment

Kent Paxton reported you would find in your packets a draft of the document brought to you from the last meeting. Edward Rowe, the MDT Coordinator from Children's Network has almost doubled the number of cases of high-risk children discussed at the local Family Preservation Councils. These particular children are usually court placements and/or connected with Probation. If the referral assessment form meets with approval, it can start to be used by Department of Children's Services, Department of Behavioral Health, Probation Department, Public Health Department, etc. line workers for purposes in referring the case onto the local Family Preservation Council.

The purpose for the MDT Referral Assessment form is to improve the outcomes for these high-risk children by collaborating and finding appropriate resources to keep the child out of an expensive placement if possible. There will be lots of training issues and policies and procedures to develop, and that is why Kent has been coordinating that piece with HSS, PDU. A decision tree will be produced to assist case managers along with a memo with instructions for use of the MDT Referral Assessment form. Some suggestions made to change the form were: put a disclaimer on the form that you absolutely do not have to have 8 areas in order to refer the case onto a Family Preservation Council. The case manager can add to the list as well for referral purposes. A suggestion was made to attach an explanation memo along with the MDT Referral Assessment form so that case managers understand the purpose of using it and how to use it. **Action: A motion was made to put the form with recommended changes and explanation memo in place. Edward Rowe will be distributing the form around the county. In 6 months a report will be brought back to this group on the results of this new process.**

5.3 Children's Policy Council Priority: Substance Abusing Pregnant and Parenting Women/Discussion Requested on Perinatal Plan and next steps

Dr. Smith referred everyone to the items in their packet. As of 1993 a statewide perinatal report showing data on mothers giving birth needing treatment programs for alcohol and drug abuse. Through clinics in Public Health they ask mothers about their drug, smoking, and alcohol usage while pregnant and then refer them to treatment. It is believed very few of these women actually go to the few treatment resources that are available. Dr. Ira Chasnoff from Chicago has a very good Perinatal Treatment Program and is willing to come out to this county for a consultation meeting. The purpose of Dr. Chasnoff's program is to get pregnant women into treatment to improve the outcomes; for the whole family, reduce juvenile delinquency and foster care for substance abusing teens, etc. Some work is being done at the local hospitals with the PADRA program for pregnant and substance abusing women. The Department of Children's Services reports approximately 80% of their cases there is a substance abuse problem. It is believed out of the 8,000 cases today only around 400 are being seen to treatment and only a 25% retention rate. The Department of Behavioral Health has maintained and increased their efforts to treat for perinatal drug abuse. According to a JAMA article, Dr. Smith recently read the true impact of drug and alcohol abuse is around 2 billion dollars annually.

The Perinatal Coalition was formed around 10 years ago to increase the capacity for treatment of outpatient and home visitation services for pregnant alcohol and drug abusing teens. Through an RFA for funds by DBH and the state there has been an increase in the number of slots. Dr. Chasnoff has come to 4 other counties in California and provided them with consultation to get their perinatal program off the ground. A goal will be to get doctors in hospitals to refer mothers for perinatal treatment programs.

Dr. Smith proposed a retreat for a consultation visit by Dr. Ira Chasnoff to be attended by department heads. He proposed May or June. The cost of the consultation visits is included in your packet. The purpose of the consultation visit will be to develop systems to get women into treatment, identify funding sources, and make decisions about how to handle the women who need treatment but not for 24 hours per day. Dr. Smith strongly encourages the consultation and retreat for 4 days and 3 nights away from the work area. The Perinatal Coalition is requesting this action as well, as this is the next logical step to take.

Some questions asked were: Why do doctors not refer these women for treatment? Response – some doctors fear breaking confidentiality, and some state they do not receive feedback from the treatment sources, and sometimes it is a personal issue with problems in their families, and some doctors do not know how to screen for those problems. A suggestion was made to include 3 to 5 doctors to attend the retreat, as they are a major starting point for the referrals.

Rudy Lopez mentioned that from a clinical perspective he agrees with the consultation process, but is concerned about the fiscal impact. For instance how will the increased referrals be handled with the current budget status? Honorable Rex Victor mentioned that in San Diego county some juveniles influenced the Board of Supervisors for services needed that would reduce the need for more beds in juvenile hall and less cases for the juvenile dependency court. **Action: A motion was made to move ahead with the discussion and consultation visit of Dr. Ira Chasnoff.**

6.0 Other

Kent thanked everyone for his or her support this year at the Shine The Light Breakfast.

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7.0 Public Comment

Meeting adjourned.

8.0 Next Meeting will be May 28, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Williams
Children's Network Policy Council Recording Secretary

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